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Global Agricultural Information Network

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Report Highlights:

Iowa Agriculture Secretary, Bill Northey, highlights the U.S. - Japan agriculture partnership in visit to Yamanashi; FDOC launches the start of the Florida Grapefruit 2011 Season in Japan; Senior Ag Attaché Discusses Agricultural Technology and Innovation at Hokkaido Conference.

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Iowa Agriculture Secretary, Bill Northey, highlights the U.S. - Japan agriculture partnership in visit to Yamanashi:

Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey led a delegation of Iowa Beef and Pork producers to Yamanashi prefecture to celebrate the opening of the AEON mall and Iowa Pork Fair. The delegation trip is a continuation of the “Partners-in-Agriculture” initiative that in Spring of 2010 celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Iowa-Yamanshi hog lift. In 1959, a typhoon devastated Yamanashi Prefecture. In response, Sergeant Richard Thomas, an Iowan, had visited Yamanshi when he was stationed in Japan, encouraged Iowans to give aid. Iowa sent 35 breeding hogs and 100,000 bushels of corn to help with the recovery. The Japanese Prefecture of Yamanashi and the State of Iowa became sister states in 1961, marking the beginning of Iowa’s first partner state relationship. A bell presented to the State of Iowa by Yamanashi symbolizes the peace and friendship that marks our relationship. AEON, the largest retailer in Japan, recently built a new flagship store in Yamanashi and wanted to officially open it with an Iowa pork fair to further strengthen the Yamanashi-Iowa sister state relationship. The Iowa team was originally slated to come in April 2011. Unfortunately, the store opened on March 11, 2011, the same day as the Great Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Secretary Northey and U.S. Agriculture Minister Counselor Geoff Wiggin met with Yamanashi Governor Yokouchi and Yamanshi Agriculture Director General Matsumura during the visit to further strengthen ties.



FDOC launches the start of the Florida Grapefruit 2011

Season in Japan: On November 7, 2011, the Florida Department of Citrus hosted the 2011/12 Trade Seminar in Tokyo, marking the start of this year’s Florida Grapefruit season in Japan. The well-attended event attracted about 300 participants, including Japanese traders and media. FDOC’s Director for International Marketing, Mike Yetter, provided an update on the status of this year’s grapefruit crop. According to Mr. Yetter, Florida grapefruit production is expected to increase by 2 percent, the first increase in four years. In addition,

Japanese professors from Doshisha University presented a lecture on the anti-aging and health benefits of Florida Grapefruit. FDOC also reiterated its commitment to continue being a dependable world supplier of grapefruit and expressed its appreciation to Japanese consumers. ATO Director, Steve Shnitzler, offered a toast to another collaborative year between Florida Exporters and Japanese traders to make this season another successful one for the Florida Grapefruit trade.

Senior Ag Attaché Discusses Agricultural Technology and Innovation at Hokkaido Conference:

On October 20, 2011, Senior Agricultural Attaché, Jeffrey Nawn, travel to Obihiro, Hokkaido to deliver the key-note speech at the “Hokkaido - Tokachi Conference”, which was a pre-conference for the upcoming May 2012 “First International Forum on Food & Environment”. His presentation focused on innovation in American agriculture, highlighting the many ways that American farmers are using modern technology to not only grow food more efficiently, but to reach their customers more effectively. Nawn gave examples of specific agribusiness firms who are operating profitably because they have adopted new business models, new growing techniques, and cutting edge marketing strategies. These examples were given for the purpose of demonstrating how the business of agriculture around the world is quickly evolving into a high-tech field. He emphasized for the conference attendees the fact that financially viable farming operations exist not because of protectionist government policies, but because their operators work hard to increase productivity and maximize efficiency.

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